



BUILDING-STRUCTURE INVENTORY FORM

NYS OFFICE OF PARKS, RECREATION
& HISTORIC PRESERVATION
DIVISION FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION
(518) 474-0479

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

UNIQUE SITE NO. _____
QUAD _____
SERIES _____
NEG. NO. _____

YOUR NAME: Cynthia Howk DATE: Dec., 1994

133 S. Fitzhugh St.

YOUR ADDRESS: Rochester, NY 14608 TELEPHONE: 546-7029

ORGANIZATION (if any): The Landmark Society of Western New York, Inc.

IDENTIFICATION

1. BUILDING NAME(S): Westfall-Mercier House
2. COUNTY: Monroe TOWN/CITY: Greece VILLAGE/hamlet: W. Greece
3. STREET LOCATION: 4350 Ridge Road West
4. OWNERSHIP: a. public ☐ b. private ☒ c/o Elaine Karren
5. PRESENT OWNER: Raymond W. Mercier ADDRESS: (same) 430 Corwin Rd.
6. USE: Original: residence Present: (same) Rochester, NY 14610
7. ACCESSIBILITY TO PUBLIC: Exterior visible from public road: Yes ☒ No ☐
Interior accessible: Explain private residence

DESCRIPTION

8. BUILDING MATERIAL: a. clapboard ☐ b. stone ☐ c. brick ☐ d. board and batten ☐
e. cobbles ☒ f. shingles ☐ g. stucco ☐ other: _____
Roof - asphalt shingles Foundation - cobblestone veneer.
9. STRUCTURAL SYSTEM: a. wood frame with interlocking joints ☐
b. wood frame with light members ☐
(if known) c. masonry load bearing walls ☒
d. metal (explain) _____
e. other _____
10. CONDITION: a. excellent ☐ b. good ☒ c. fair ☐ d. deteriorated ☐
11. INTEGRITY: a. original site ☒ b. moved ☐ if so, when? _____
c. list major alterations and dates (if known): _____

(see continuation sheet)

12. PHOTO:

13. MAP:

"That's a straight 'red.' It's a lovely, charming little cottage on a beautiful site." P.Malo.

COLOR CODE

Red



14. THREATS TO BUILDING: a. none known ☐ b. zoning ☒ c. roads ☒
d. developers ☒ e. deterioration ☐
f. other: _____
15. RELATED OUTBUILDINGS AND PROPERTY:
a. barn ☐ b. carriage house ☐ c. garage ☐
d. privy ☐ e. shed ☐ f. greenhouse ☐
g. shop ☐ h. gardens ☐
i. landscape features: deciduous trees/shrubs, coniferous shrubs
j. other: _____
16. SURROUNDINGS OF THE BUILDING (check more than one if necessary):
a. open land ☒ b. woodland ☒ - to north of site.
c. scattered buildings ☒
d. densely built-up ☐ e. commercial ☒
f. industrial ☐ g. residential ☒
h. other: _____
17. INTERRELATIONSHIP OF BUILDING AND SURROUNDINGS:
(Indicate if building or structure is in an historic district)

(see continuation sheet)

18. OTHER NOTABLE FEATURES OF BUILDING AND SITE (including interior features if known):

(see continuation sheet)

SIGNIFICANCE

19. DATE OF INITIAL CONSTRUCTION: c. 1830s - 1852

ARCHITECT: not determined

BUILDER: not determined

20. HISTORICAL AND ARCHITECTURAL IMPORTANCE:

(see continuation sheet)

21. SOURCES: (see continuation sheet)

22. THEME: agricultural: former farm residence; cobblestone architecture.

11c.

Contemporary, shed-roofed, one-story, frame rear (north) addition appears to have been constructed c. 1950s-60s.

Brick chimney on the west elevation appears to be an early/mid-20th-century addition.

17. This cobblestone house is located on a 9.2-acre lot on the north side of Ridge Road West in the southwest quadrant of the town. It has a deep set-back from the road and is set below the grade-level of the geologic ridge upon which the roadway is located. The front elevation faces south, across a large expanse of lawn. To the rear (north) of the house is open, undeveloped land with mostly deciduous trees and shrubs. There are no other buildings on the site. The surrounding neighborhood is comprised of mixed residential and commercial uses. Adjacent buildings on the north side of the street include a late-20th-century auto dealership and early-20th-century houses. Across the street are a row of late-19th and early-20th-century houses.

18. One-and-one-half-story, side-gabled, cobblestone farmhouse with a contemporary, one-story, shed-roofed rear (north) wing. The main block, with its side gables, is three-bays-wide by two-bays-deep. The house stands on a raised foundation of fieldstone. Fenestration is regular and symmetrical with 12/12, double-hung windows on the facade (south elevation) and 6/6, double-hung windows on the east and west elevations. The windows on the facade have stone (probably limestone) lintels and sills. The windows on the west and east elevations have vertical brick lintels and concrete sills. On the facade, at the southwest and southeast corners, are cut stone (limestone) quoins. A stone watertable is also located on the facade, between the cobblestone wall above and the fieldstone foundation below.

Under the low-pitched, gabled roof is a narrow, Federal style cornice with gable end returns. The louvered wood shutters on the facade, east, and west elevations appear to date from the 20th century. The stone front entrance steps and wrought iron railing appear to date from the 20th century.

A contemporary, one-story, shed-roofed frame rear (north) wing has been added to the house, c. 1950s-60s. It extends across the full width of the north elevation and is clad with

18. continued

wide, horizontal wood siding. Fenestration includes sliding-pane and picture windows.

In Carl Schmidt's book, Cobblestone Masonry, he describes the cobblestone masonry of this house. "The first floor is four and one-half feet above the grade, requiring a flight of steps with seven risers to reach the entrance. Below the four-inch high water table, extending across the front of the house, the wall is ashlar masonry. The cobblestones are water-rounded fieldstones of various sizes, shapes and colors, which are laid five courses to a quoin height. They vary from one and three-quarters to two and three-quarters inches in height and from two to four inches in length, including some round stones. The horizontal joints vary from one-half to three-quarters inches wide, and are formed into 'V's'; the vertical joints are also embellished with short 'V's'. The cobblestones on the side elevations are also water-rounded fieldstones, a little larger in size, of various sizes, shapes and colors, and laid four courses to a quoin height."

"The front corner quoins are smooth carefully squared gray limestones, about twelve inches high, eighteen inches long and six inches thick. The window openings on the front have gray limestone sills and lintels, while the window openings in the side walls have flat arches formed of vertical brick, but the sills are modern concrete."

The large 9.2-acre lot is comprised of a wide, front lawn to the south. To the rear of the house is unmaintained, open land with overgrown, scrub vegetation and deciduous trees. The house is on a particularly vulnerable site, due to the size of its lot and its proximity to the expanding commercial development in the neighborhood.

20. The Westfall-Mercier House is architecturally significant as a distinctive example of an early-19th-century, Federal style, cobblestone farmhouse retaining a high degree of integrity of design, materials, and craftsmanship. It is one of four extant cobblestone buildings in the town of Greece. The house is historically significant as a visual reminder of the agricultural heritage of Greece.

The one-and-one-half-story, rectangular-plan, side-gabled

20. continued

house is representative of the vernacular, Federal style farmhouse built in Greece in the early and mid-19th century. Federal style architecture was popular from the 1790s to about 1830. In rural areas, however, changes of taste did not occur as quickly and architectural styles often remained popular for longer periods of time. Because of its design characteristics and cobblestone method of construction, this house could date as early as the 1830s.

The house is located on Ridge Road which was formerly the shoreline of glacial Lake Iroquois and later a main trail of the Iroquois Indians. In 1813, the State Legislature allocated \$5,000 to cut down brush and to bridge streams along the Ridge from Rochester to Lewiston. This and later improvements along the road opened the way for settlers to establish their homes, farms, and businesses along the Ridge.

The 1852 county map shows a building on this site and "J. Westfall" listed as owner. The building is shown east of a creek (Smith Creek). Because of its vernacular Federal style, this house is most likely the building shown on this early map.

The 1872 county map shows this site as a property just east of the "West Greece" hamlet, located at the intersection of Manitou and West Ridge Roads. The house is shown set back significantly from the road and "D. Rowland" is listed as the owner.

The 1902 county map shows this as a 30.5-acre parcel with three buildings and "A. Hopper" as owner. The long, rectangular lot has a creek flowing through its northern part. The house is shown with a frame outbuilding to the northwest and a small, frame (residence?) to the southwest, close to the roadway.

The 1924 county map shows the same 30.5-acre parcel with three buildings that is listed on the 1902 map. The owner is "B. Hooper." This is probably the same family, but the spelling is inconsistent. This property is just east of the West Greece hamlet (Manitou Rd. is listed as "North Town Line Road"). The 1930 suburban directory shows Charles A. and Emma Priestly at this address. He is listed as a painter.

The present owner, Raymond W. Mercier, has resided here since the 1940s. The 1959 county map shows this parcel as a 9.11-

20. continued

acre site owned by R. & L. Mercier. Mr. Mercier, a widower, is retired from the research division of Eastman Kodak Company. The stone house is the only building indicated on the map. Smith Creek cuts through the north end of the lot.

The Westfall-Mercier House is architecturally significant as a distinctive example of the cobblestone method of construction in New York State. This cobblestone farmhouse property may be eligible for listing in the State and National Registers of Historic Places. It embodies the distinctive characteristics of cobblestone construction in its use of lake-washed cobblestones laid in horizontal rows and bonded with limestone mortar, the use of stone quoins to decorate and stabilize the corners of the building, and the use of stone sills and lintels at window and door openings. Typical of the Middle Period (c. 1835 - c. 1845) of cobblestone construction, the house features water-rounded stones of various shapes, sizes, and colors laid four courses to a quoin height.

The house is additionally significant as a representative example of early/mid-19th-century Federal, rural domestic architecture in the town of Greece.

21. See final report for bibliography.



